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## THE PROBLEM OF PROFESSIONAL TRAINING.

[RECENT MOVEMENTS IN GERMANY AND ENGLAND.]

§ 1. The occasion of the publication of a new educational journal suggests to our mind the inquiry : " What are the problems which *first of all* need attention from those who have at heart the cause of educational reform ? "

The field is vast. We may begin with a problem of organization, with the primary question of school attendance involving the rival claims of state and family, and from this pass through the whole field of questions involved in administration, till we conclude that of university government. Then we may enter the school walls ; we have many unsolved problems relating to the individual child, challenging our estimate of psychology as an aid to education ; we have to face social problems of the deepest moment involving the moral and spiritual health of the corporate society of school ; finally we beat out our brains with discussions upon every branch of school instruction.

All this ceaseless activity means unrest, and the desire for reform ; but how much of it is progress ? I have no desire to lay down pessimistic views, least of all before readers who belong to a country in which enthusiasm for education seems to be unbounded ; but I wish to urge that progress needs to be ordered, and energy needs to be disciplined and united, if the full effects are to be secured. Consider the enormous waste of zeal and devotion in our profession, which the pedagogic literature of the last hundred years exhibits ! Think of the hundreds of capable, earnest teachers who, single-handed, have thought out their plan for saving the souls and minds of our children, and have striven in darkness to bring their plans to the light. I have for some time been inquiring into the history of modern language instruction, and the evidence which this research affords—of wild hope, of boundless energy, of eternal disappointment—impresses my attention most forcibly with the need for some *system* in our efforts to promote the common cause. Here and there a Pestalozzi or a Fröbel may cast his bread upon the waters, and find it after many days, but how many noble hearts like theirs have—all unknown to us—been broken ! I venture to say that every reader of these lines, who has been for a few years engaged in teaching, will re-

call a dozen names of capable teachers who are full of new ideas, and determined to realize them, but who never produced work of permanent value. Their seed is thrown upon the wayside, and, if a grain or two by chance bears fruit, the scanty harvest will be left to perish.

It may indeed be argued, that progress is necessarily slow in education as in every other field of reform ; that many heroes unknown to fame must die upon the field before the battle is won. True, but I venture to assert that in our calling this sacrifice of life is out of all proportion to its results, and that by foresight and by judgment it may *in part* be saved. Besides the common causes which stand to oppose all reform (prejudice, and lack of material means), I seem to perceive two special hindrances in the road. First, the teacher is *fettered*; his wings are clipped by state regulations, by committees, by parents. These forces tend to destroy his self-activity, and instead of wisely limiting their control to the essential minimum, they tend to turn him into a machine, or a flatterer and bread winner. Secondly, the teacher is *untrained*. As a youth, he comes to his task full of high ideals and of intellectual force, realizing the nobility of his calling, and willing to sacrifice much in its performance ; but *ignorant* of what others have done and are doing, he beats the air in hopeless war, and conquers foes whom others have conquered a hundred times before. Those of my readers who have had any long experience will know how very true this record has been in their own career. Hence I hold that, if we value economy, we must deal first with the two problems here presented. The first we may describe as the problem of School Control ; the second, the problem of Professional Training. Upon the second I propose to offer some comment, especially in view of recent movements relating to the training of secondary teachers in England and Germany.

§ 2. It will be observed that I have here offered an argument for training merely with a view to the economy of energy ; the more usual arguments need not be enumerated, for they are practically accepted by public opinion, and the question now under debate is rather the *form* that secondary training shall take.

Before discussing this, however, let me again emphasize the fact that it is professional training which energetic teachers require, if they are really to effect the reform which they have at heart. It is often said that the poor teacher needs training, in order to make

him somewhat better, but that the really capable man, "the born teacher," can do without it. True, I should reply, he may do without it, so far as his own fortunes are concerned ; his common sense and his activity will secure him an honorable place in his profession, but with this he will not be content. He is a man of ideas, and will be constantly seeking to develop his methods ; he will seek to impart his ideas to others. The growth of the educational press is an evidence of the teacher's desire not only to instruct his pupils, but his colleagues ; to submit his discoveries, his judgment, to their criticism. Your successful teacher is almost always a missionary. For him, then, training means a discipline which shall keep his isolated efforts from running astray ; a knowledge of the whole field of education which shall tell him what others have done all the world over ; a set of principles by which he can check his plans, and can fit them into their place in the whole pedagogic scheme. Just as the chemist, before he enters upon an investigation, will look everywhere around, and learn what has been done before, so the trained teacher, before venturing to work out his own ideas, will learn of others, and will not submit his own opinion, as a contribution to progress, until he has a better basis than his own experience.

§ 3. This argument, which especially hits the case of the men who suppose themselves least in need of training, may also be adopted to indicate an important element in the organization of a training course. It demands that training shall be scientific, conducted by way of investigation as well as by precept. The pedagogic student requires, first of all, to obtain inspiration and knowledge in the usual disciplinary studies related to his calling, but he also requires to be trained as an investigator ; to be put within reach not only of the methods of his own professor, but of the general course of thought in the whole realm of education. This spirit of investigation is surely the saving quality in German higher teaching, which has induced so many hundreds of Americans to frequent the universities of Germany in preference to those of England where it is conspicuously absent.

The contrast between the two countries in educational method is, indeed, forcibly illustrated by the agitation now proceeding on the problem of higher training. I venture to assert that the industry and zeal of the English teacher is no whit behind that of his German confrère, that in natural capacity for dealing with

children he surpasses the German, but in comparing the attitude of the two in relation to this problem one must place England at least half-a-century behind. Space will not permit me to support this opinion in any detail, nor is it necessary, since an account of what is being done in the two countries has been recently reported in *The Pedagogical Seminary*.\*

§ 4. In Germany the conservative attitude of head masters and of state governments has gradually been influenced by the example of primary training, and by the acknowledged success of the few pedagogic seminaries conducted in universities, such as Halle, Jena, and Giessen; the unsatisfactory *Probejahr* has been set on one side, and in Prussia a systematic course of gymnasial training, of a practical and theoretical nature, has been imposed upon all candidates for posts in secondary schools. It is true that this particular form of training does not satisfy the reformers, and in a course of lectures just published † Professor Rein of Jena, has exposed the evils that are likely to ensue from the scheme now in operation; but whatever may be its defects, their *Gymnasial-Seminar* definitely commits the scholastic profession in Germany of every grade to a systematic period of professional training extending over two years. The second year still retains the old name of *Probejahr*, since the Prussian government is conservative enough to retain the shell of the old organization; but it is obvious that a *Probejahr* following *after a Seminarjahr* will be a wholly different thing from the old *Probejahr*, which had no such foundation; a university scholar, who has had *one* year of training, will know how to make good use of a second, even if he is largely left to himself.

As yet, little has been put into print to show how this new plan for training is likely to operate, but from the few reports already published there is every sign that the German *Gymnasium* will be stirred to new pedagogic life by the obligation to impart thorough training to pedagogic students. A report from Dr. Moll of Stettin ‡ will probably interest many head masters in

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\*December, 1891. Art. III, Higher Pedagogical Seminaries in Germany; and Art. IV, The Training of Teachers in England.

† *Am Ende der Schulreform?* (M 1.50. Langensalza: Beyer u. Söhne, 1893.) It contains a usual bibliography on the whole question of School Reform and of Training.

‡ *Unser zweites Seminarjahr*;—besonderer Abdruck der *Zeitschrift für das Gymnasialwesen*. (Berlin: Weidmann.)

America ; I have myself greatly profited by being permitted to watch the work of the Hofrath Dr. Richter's *Seminar* in Jena, which has been established by the Government of Saxe-Weimar\* on the model of the Prussian plan. This last is all the more interesting, because the Thüringen government have recognized what is the chief defect of the Prussian scheme and have been able to remedy it. In Prussia the *Seminar* students are entirely trained in the *Gymnasium*, apart from the university, and apart from the philosophic studies which must form the basis of a sound pedagogic system ; theory is separated from practice. At Jena, however, the university, with its professorship of pedagogics and its practising school,† was already on the ground, and it was therefore a simple matter to arrange that students intending to teach should attend both the *Gymnasial Seminar* and the University *Seminar* conducted by Professor Rein, acquiring in the former the special knowledge of the art as practised in the *Gymnasium* (*Gymnasial Pädagogik*), and in the latter, the general foundation of principle and practice in the whole field of education (*Allgemeine Pädagogik*). And, if their philosophic studies have not been completed in earlier years, they have also the opportunity of attending lectures in ethics and psychology, with the University professor of philosophy.‡

§ 5. Turning now to England, we have, in the recent Conference of Head Masters, a striking illustration of the world-wide difference both in opinion and method between the two countries. This Conference is attended only by the head masters of a hundred or so of the most select schools ; schools, many of them of great reputation and of very illustrious tradition. The subject has been debated by the Conference for more than fifteen years, and yet nothing even at this day has been done beyond a resolution passed at the last gathering, as follows :

That it is desirable that head masters should support the Teachers' Training Syndicate, by giving preference in their appointments to masterships to such applicants as have passed, or are willing to pass, the examination in the theoretical knowledge of education.||

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\* *Das Gymnasialseminar in Jena*, (in the *Gymnasium Jahresbericht* for 1891 : Jena, G. Neuenhahn.)

† See Dr. Burnham's Report in *The Pedagogical Seminary*, pp. 397-400.

‡ I have given a fuller account of the work in Jena, with recommendations for its adaptation to the special needs, as I think, of England, in the *London Journal of Education*, Dec. 1892, Feb., March, 1893.

|| *London Journal of Education*, Jan., 1893.

The mover of the resolution, the Rev. the Hon. E. Lyttleton, maintained his resolution partly on the ground that the examination "did not involve any large expenditure of time or money"! Foreigners, unfamiliar with the English educational world, find it difficult to realize the implicit faith which is placed in simultaneous paper examinations, in every English school and university. The Conference seemed seriously to suppose that something which might be called training can be acquired by getting up the contents of two or three text-books, by reproducing them on paper in answer to a few simple questions, and by accepting a certificate in acknowledgement of the transaction! The saddest part in the story is played by the university which establishes such an examination, and which is content to have fulfilled its duty to pedagogics in this fashion.\* Fortunately, there are other tendencies in English education of a more hopeful kind, and women teachers are getting to work to solve the problem of higher training more earnestly.† And however backward the great public schools may be in taking up such a reform, there are many signs that it will be pressed on in other quarters. The agitation which for some years has concerned itself with commercial and with technical instruction is now striking deeper, and a sound public opinion seems to be forming:—that the whole field of secondary school administration needs to be dealt with by the state. The present energetic Minister of Education under the new Liberal government, has a bill for this purpose in hand, and although actual legislation will probably be long delayed, the stimulus has been created, and the middle classes of England are slowly coming to the conviction that the education of their children is worthy of their serious consideration. This reform will certainly be accompanied by a demand that the teacher should possess professional skill.

§ 6. We see, therefore, in England, the beginning of a movement which will lead to secondary training, although little can be gained from English experience in this direction; in Germany we see a new and most important experiment now in progress. The time, as it seems to me, is ripe for a full and dispassionate consideration of the principles involved in our problem. No

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\* See Mrs. Oscar Browning's preface to Felkin's translation of Herbart's *Allgemeine Pädagogik*. (London and New York, 1892.)

† See *The Pedagogical Seminary*, as above, p. 415.

doubt the conditions of every country and of every grade of school are different, but certain principles are common to all, although the particular methods in which these are to be carried out may vary. I venture, in the following paragraphs, to lay down certain propositions for consideration.

*A. The Administration of Pedagogic Training.*

1. Every authority which establishes a school is bound, as a part of its duty, to see to it that the staff of teachers are professionally trained. Just as public authorities require evidence of efficiency from members of other professions, from medical men and from lawyers, so it is their right and their duty to require the same from all persons who ask permission to take charge of the education of children, whether in private or in public schools. In other words, the responsibility for training lies, finally, at the door of the executive, local and imperial.

2. Since, in matters of education, public authorities look to the profession for guidance in the administration of school law, the *immediate* responsibility lies upon superintendents, upon head masters and presidents, to whom laymen look for guidance.

3. The responsibility is also shared by the universities, as being the center for all higher study. The honor and reputation of a university depends upon its recognition of all scholarly studies, of all departments of research within its curriculum.\*

In the case of teachers, this responsibility is particularly great because secondary teachers at present receive their academic training in college and university, and by excluding pedagogics from the programme of studies, the university allows by implication that the pursuit is unnecessary.

*B. The Nature of Training.*

4. Broadly considered, the period of training may be said to comprise the whole period from the close of boyhood to the time when the teacher is fully qualified to take his place on a staff. But this period includes a term of pure scholarly study, which, for our present purpose, may be disregarded. This only may be noted, that the intending teacher should not only obtain a good general education, such as is represented by a B.A. degree, but should possess an advanced acquaintance with some one branch of study. And he should possess this acquaintance, not primari-

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\* Compare *Rein*, as above, p. 64.



ly because he will teach this branch hereafter, but because his investigation into this branch will make him a scholar, and will give him *the capacity hereafter to study by himself many other branches of instruction* which his work as a teacher will bring within his range.

5. This period of scholarly study should be concluded before professional training is entered upon.\*

6. Professional training itself may be divided as follows :

(i) Study of psychology and ethics. This may very well form a part of the general education described above, but if it has not formed a part of the university study, it must be taken with professional training.

(ii) Study of pedagogics proper, including the philosophy of education, the organization of education, and the technique of instruction, (for advanced students, the history of education as a formal study).

(iii) Acquaintance with children and practice in teaching them. The one indispensable condition for the teacher is that he shall *know the child*.

(iv) Special study and practice in the special type of school to which the student will hereafter devote himself. We have, thus, primary school pedagogics, kindergarten pedagogics, high school pedagogics, home tutor pedagogics (called by the Germans *Haus-Pädagogik*), and the like. To this add the special requirements of schools for the blind, schools for the deaf and dumb, reformatories, etc.

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\* Reformers in Germany are urging the separation of general from professional training in normal colleges. See *Rein* as above, pp. 57, 58. While we thus make a clear distinction, in theory and in practice, between higher general education and professional training, it must be allowed that when, as a matter of fact, certain necessary elements of a teacher's general education have been neglected, they must in some way or other be supplied. Thus, Miss Hughes in her Ladies' Training College at Cambridge, Eng. pays special attention to elocution and to drawing ; and with justice, for without facility in these two arts of expression, what teacher can hope to influence the minds of children ? In the same way, we ought to require every secondary teacher to have done practical work in at least one branch of science, and to be familiar with one foreign language. And we ought to take it as a matter of course that the student in training has become familiar with the history and literature of his own country. These, however, are all extra matters, and, however necessary it may be for a training seminary to try and supply such defects, they must be rigorously kept apart from the proper work of pedagogics.

*C. The Necessary Equipment for Training.*

7. These different departments of training may be provided for in various ways, but it must be insisted that *theory and practice go hand in hand*. Academic lectures on pedagogics are of very little use to a student, if he does not at the same time witness and share in their application. The principle of modern study, that every science and art must be investigated in the laboratory as well as in the lecture room, should be extended also to pedagogics. And the laboratory of the pedagogic professor is his practising school.

8. Hence, a university practising school (small or large), is the necessary equipment to an efficient pedagogic course.\*

9. The university, then, can and should provide for all the wants of a pedagogic student except those of (iv), which can only be met by actual association with the special type of school. This last requirement constitutes the case for school seminaries, on the Prussian plan.

10. An ideal training scheme, therefore, might be sketched as follows, assuming that the university is situated in a city, within walking distance of a number of schools: The professor of pedagogics has a small practising school, which is taught and managed by his assistants, who have the same status as demonstrators in laboratories. The students after completing their university studies enter the *Seminar*, and at the same time or afterwards attach themselves to one of the secondary schools of the neighborhood, high school, kindergarten or the like.

11. Besides undertaking this professional duty of training teachers, the university pedagogics conducts research, and so assists the progress of reform both in the science and art of education.

12. The university also offers a further advantage that it brings pedagogics into association with medicine and with theology, and with students of social science, as well as with philosophy, the servant as well as the mistress of all the sciences. The clergyman and the doctor and the statesman can help the teacher, and in turn must learn from him.

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\* NOTE.—In a university where *only* special research work is undertaken and from which ordinary students are excluded, these propositions would not apply. I am contemplating only the wants of the ordinary secondary teacher.

13. The above propositions apply generally to all grades of teachers, for the present distinctions between one and another are social and not pedagogic. The only difference between one and another is that for the so-called lower grades (primary and kindergarten), the period of general education is usually shorter and hence the student is not sufficiently scholarly to be admitted to a university career ; this justifies the existence of normal and Frœbel institutions. But in these institutions the same rule ought to hold good (No. 5 above), general education to be completed and closed before the period of professional training is commenced.

§ 7. Each of these paragraphs deserves a chapter to itself ; but, as they stand, their meaning will be clear, and I throw them out in this form for the consideration of secondary teachers, who *already accept* the fundamental principle, that the first plank in educational reform is the professional equipment of the teacher. To those who accept this principle in general terms, but who are doubtful as to the mode in which it may be carried out, I would say :—Study the results of secondary training in the universities and schools of Germany, since this is the only country where experience has been gathered. Doubtless on new soil the German methods will not find acceptance without change. In learning from Germany we can hope to profit by her experience and to improve upon it. We cannot, however, shut our eyes to the definite conclusion to which Prussia and most of the other German states have arrived : that practical and theoretical training is indispensable to every class of teacher ; and that the state is to insist upon the requirement being fulfilled. In England, the same provision will come, however long the forces of opposition may succeed in delaying reform.

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*Jena.*